

Fairfax County Public Library

FY 2012 User Survey

Final Report

Background

In response to the need to gather annual information regarding customer satisfaction with library resources and services, FCPL conducts customer survey and outreach efforts on a regular and ongoing basis. The most frequent survey effort is the library's 'Quick' survey. This short customer survey is designed to gather supplementary information during periods between FCPL's larger user studies. Previously FCPL had relied on a full user study to gather information about our customers, how they use the library, and their satisfaction with the services we offer. Under ideal circumstances FCPL would conduct a user study every three years. However, the realities of the workload that such an effort places on branch staff as well as that of the Strategic Planning and Customer Research Office make it difficult to maintain such a demanding schedule. Advances in technology may well help us better meet this schedule in the future. This year we are once again conducting the more extensive user survey as part of our larger strategic planning process.

The library's user studies run between three and six pages and collect a variety of demographic data about our users. The smaller "quick" survey helps fill in the gaps between user studies and is designed to provide a snapshot of customer responses to varying pieces of information of interest to library management. The "quick" survey typically includes one customer satisfaction question with the remaining questions tailored to meet changing data requirements and informational interests of the library. Questionnaires can also be modified to gather data of particular interest to individual branches.

Data from the customer satisfaction question, combined with the results to the same question on the website user survey provide documentation for the library's performance measurement results which are included in our annual budget submission.

General

This is the fifth time the library has conducted a comprehensive user survey. The survey was made available to customers from November 14 through December 2, 2011 as part of an overall update of the library's strategic plan.

For most of the larger branches the supply of survey forms diminished quickly while smaller community branches experienced some difficulty generating completed survey forms. All branches received 300 questionnaires (Access Services - 75). A total of 4,140 responses to the user survey were received, a response rate of 62%. The library's annual quick survey uses the same volume and distribution of survey forms. The FY2010 quick survey received 4,209 responses, approximately 2% more than the recent user survey.

Questions for the FY2012 user survey were developed through cooperation of the library's Customer Services, Staff Development, and Strategic Planning departments.

Results

1. Age:

	<u>User Survey Responses</u>	<u>2010 Census Fairfax County</u>
Under 5 years	>1%	6.7%
5 to 9 years	1.6%	6.7%
10 to 14 years	6.3%	6.7%
15 to 19 years	4.1%	6.2%
20 to 24 years	2.8%	5.6%
25 to 29 years	3.4%	7.4%
30 to 34 years	2.9%	7.3%
35 to 39 years	7.3%	7.5%
40 to 44 years	9.8%	7.8%
45 to 49 years	9.6%	8.3%
50 to 54 years	8.4%	7.9%
55 to 59 years	9.5%	6.6%
60 to 64 years	10.5%	5.5%
65 to 69 years	9.2%	3.5%
70 to 74 years	6.0%	2.3%
75 years and over	6.9%	4.0%

2. Home zip code: Percent of Fairfax County respondents who live in the service area of the branch where they completed the survey.

In order to better understand the communities served by its individual branch libraries, FCPL assigns each branch its own service area. These service areas provide a framework for analysis of demographic, economic, and of course library data.

Results for individual branches show that respondents who indicated they reside within a particular service area (as determined by zip code) ranged from a low of 28% at Kings Park, to a high of 90% at Centreville Regional and Herndon Fortnightly. While a high percentage indicates respondents using that library reside within that library's service area, a low percentage might indicate a location along a busy commuter route, or in the case of Kings Park, the fact that the service area dividing line is the road it is located on.

3. Gender

70%	Female	(n=2,889)
30%	Male	(n=1,214)

National research regarding male and female preferences in library use, indicate that these widely disparate percentages are in line with national statistics for public library use by men and women.

4. Are you a student?

81% No (n=3,283)
 19% Yes (n=763)

The percentage of respondents indicating “Yes”, they were students, is identical to the library’s 2006 survey results for the same question.

5. What is your race? (choose one)

	<u>User Survey Responses</u>	<u>2010 Census Fairfax County</u>
White	76%	63%
Black / African American	8%	9%
American Indian / Alaska Native	1%	0.4%
Asian:	13%	18%
Asian Indian	27%	23%
Chinese	16%	14%
Filipino	8%	8%
Japanese	2%	2%
Korean	21%	22%
Vietnamese	12%	15%
Other Asian	14%	16%
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander:	>1%	0.1%
Native Hawaiian	50%	24%
Guamanian or Chamorro	---	35%
Samoan	---	11%
Other Pacific Islander	50%	30%
Some Other Race	2%	6.1%
Two or More Races	>1%	4.1%

Note that the results for how library respondents identified their racial makeup closely mirror that for Fairfax County at large.

6. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

	<u>User Survey Responses</u>	<u>2010 Census Fairfax County</u>
No	94%	84%
Yes	6%	16%

7. What languages are spoken in your home? (check all that apply)

94%	English	(n=3,885)
6%	Spanish	(n=265)
3%	Korean	(n=106)
2%	Vietnamese	(n=70)
14%	Other	(n=585)

8. Do you have a Fairfax County Public Library card?

96%	Yes	(n=3,950)
3%	No	(n=135)
>1%	Don't know	(n=16)

9. Have you visited the library's website or followed the library on any of the social media sites such as Facebook or Twitter?

63%	Yes	(n=2,555)
37%	No	(n=1,523)

10. Do you own an eReader (Kindle, Nook, etc.), smartphone, iPad, tablet, or any other handheld device capable of downloading eBooks, eAudiobooks, or accessing the internet?

55%	No	(n=2,242)
45%	Yes	(n=1,822)

During the strategic planning process three separate surveys were conducted at about the same time. This question was included on all of them.¹ In addition to in-branch library users finding this question as part of their paper survey questionnaire, all library staff were asked to complete their own survey which included this question. Finally, this question was available online as part of the library's website survey. Comparative results across all three survey groups for this question follow:

	n=4,140	n=199	n=270
	User	Web Site	Staff
	Survey	Survey	Survey
Yes	45%	57%	60%
No	55%	43%	40%

11. What services do you think the library should provide or continue to provide in the future? (check all that apply)

- 60% Open libraries more hours
- 41% Support school-age children and teens with homework assignments
- 40% Focus more on electronic resources including eBooks, databases, etc.
- 40% Purchase more print books and periodicals
- 36% Increase early literacy programs, books & services for preschoolers and their caregivers
- 26% Provide more computers at libraries for the public to use
- 23% Offer classes on resume writing / job searching
- 14% Other

This question was also asked on all three surveys. Comparative results across all three survey groups for this question follow:

	n=4,140	n=199	n=270
	User	Web Site	Staff
	Survey	Survey	Survey
Open libraries more hours	60%	60%	67%
Support school-age children and teens with homework assignments	41%	30%	67%
Focus more on electronic resources including eBooks, databases, etc.	40%	50%	67%
Purchase more print books and periodicals	40%	39%	59%
Increase early literacy programs (books and services for preschoolers and their caregivers)	36%	34%	64%
Provide more computers at libraries for the public to use	26%	16%	53%
Offer classes on resume writing/job searching	23%	18%	44%
Other, please describe:	14%	19%	11%

12. What do you think is the library's greatest asset? (choose one)

- 69% Books (print and/or electronic)
- 16% Staff
- 8% Technology (web site, computers, online resources, WiFi, catalog, etc.)
- 5% Library buildings (tables/chairs, meeting rooms, etc.)
- 2% Other
- 1% Customers

This question was also asked on all three surveys. Comparative results across all three survey groups for this question follow:

						n=4,140	n=199	n=270
						User	Web Site	Staff
						Survey	Survey	Survey
Books (print and/or electronic)						69%	63%	25%
Staff						16%	19%	44%
Technology (website, computers, online resources, WiFi, catalog, etc.)						8%	10%	10%
Library buildings (tables/chairs, meeting rooms, etc.)						5%	2%	3%
Other, please explain						2%	5%	1%
Customers						1%	1%	18%

13. Are there any essential library services that you think are NOT being provided by the Fairfax County Public Library?

18% of respondents (739) provided an explanation of what essential services they think the library is not currently providing. See the accompanying appendix for a complete list of these responses.

14. Considering your information needs, and those of your family, what do you think the library's top three priorities for the future should be?

64% of respondents (2,650) offered suggestions for what should be the library's top priorities. See the accompanying appendix for a complete list of these responses.

15. Please rate the importance of the following services offered by the library to the community (even if you don't use them), with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important.

Average	
Importance	
1.82	Books, magazines, DVDs, Books on CD
1.92	Online resources (databases, catalog, etc.)
2.00	Research and reference assistance
2.02	Internet access / WiFi
2.04	Technology (computers, WiFi, web site, etc.)
2.10	Children's programs
2.25	Teen / young adult programs
2.32	Downloadable eBooks / eAudiobooks
2.50	A community gathering place
2.53	Adult programs

- 2.58 Help with job search and career changes
- 2.86 Government eServices
- 2.93 Services & resources that support businesses
- 3% Other, please describe:

16. Overall, how satisfied are you with the services and resources of the Fairfax County Public Library?

- 71% Very satisfied
- 24% Moderately Satisfied
- 3% Somewhat Satisfied
- 1% Not very satisfied
- >1% Not at all satisfied

Though slightly lower than FY2010, satisfaction among respondents indicating they were “very satisfied” with library services and resources remains high at 71%. Satisfaction among respondents indicating they were “very satisfied” at regional branches was 70%, slightly lower than FY2010. Satisfaction among respondents indicating they were “very satisfied” at community branches was slightly higher than at regionals at 72%. When reporting satisfaction results FCPL typically combines information from respondents indicating they were both “moderately” and “very satisfied”, resulting in a satisfaction rate of 95% for this survey. A record thirteen branches as well as Access Services did not record a single respondent indicating they were “not at all” satisfied.

17. Please offer any additional comments or suggestions regarding the materials and services offered by the Fairfax County Public Library.

A total of 857 respondents (21%) included additional comments on their survey response. In most instances these comments included multiple issues and covered more than one topic. See the accompanying appendix for a complete list of these responses.

18. Would you like to become an FCPL Customer Advisor?

A total of 923 respondents (22%) expressed interest in becoming a Customer Advisor. However, 1% of these volunteers (66) failed to provide any contact information.

For the past four years library surveys have provided an opportunity to solicit volunteers interested in becoming “customer advisors”. Volunteers were asked to provide their name and email address if interested in providing the library with periodic feedback on our resources, services, or on any topic of interest to library management. The response was again overwhelming with 923 respondents indicating their interest in becoming a “customer advisor”. These respondents have been contacted resulting in an updated pool of Customer Advisors totaling more than 1,500 volunteers.

¹ Notes:

1 - Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

2 - The number of survey responses can differ from answer to answer; from question to question; and from survey to survey. For example, for "What services do you think the library should provide or continue to provide in the future?" the percentage of respondents who indicated "Open libraries more hours" across the three surveys is very similar: 60% (User Survey); 60% (Web Site Survey); 67% (Staff Survey). However, the actual number of respondents answering the question in this way can vary widely between surveys: 2,501 (User Survey); 120 (Web Site Survey); 180 (Staff Survey).